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Parents in Florida begin grim task

Victims of Wednesday shooting now must be buried

Melissa Montoya,
Emily Bohatch
and Doug Stanglin
USA TODAY NETWORK

PARKLAND, Fla. – Two days after a teenage gunman killed 17 people at a Florida high school, mourners packed the Star of David chapel Friday as parents of the victims began the grim ritual of burying their children.

Friends and classmates who could not get inside through the throngs of mourners strained to hear the voices chanting Jewish prayers for Alyssa Al-hadeff, 14. She was remembered as a star soccer player with “the strongest personality” and a creative writer with a memorable smile. Alyssa was one of 14 students gunned down in their class-

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At least 1,000 people attended a vigil Thursday night near Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Fla.
XAVIER
MASCARENAS/USA
TODAY NETWORK



A Hurley Elementary School transitional kindergarten student practices spelling at the Visalia school Wednesday morning. The statewide initiative of transitional kindergarten has grown in popularity. PHOTOS BY CALLEY CEDERLOF

Is TK an effective intro to education?

Parents debate pros and cons

Calley Cederlof
Visalia Times-Delta
USA TODAY NETWORK

Samarah Gray held her son Jayden Foley as she went over paperwork to enroll the 4-year-old in transitional kindergarten.

Jayden squirmed in his mother’s arms and wrote on a piece of paper as Gray spoke with an employee of Tulare City School District.

Jayden, who was promised ice cream if he waited for his mother to finish, is an active 4-year-old, his mother said.



A Hurley Elementary School transitional kindergarten student writes words on the whiteboard for her classmates at the Visalia school Wednesday morning.

“He’s super smart, he’s just super busy,” Gray said. “He needs a lot to keep him entertained.”

Expending some of his extra energy is one of the benefits the Tulare mother hopes comes from enrolling Jayden in transitional kindergarten, she said.

“He is always with adults, so I want him to have more interaction with children,” Gray said. “I want to give him a head start.”

Jayden will be one of hundreds of Valley students entering transitional kindergarten in the fall. The statewide initiative has grown in popularity.

By spring, thousands of children will enroll in transitional kindergar-

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County educator struck by golf cart

Exeter Union staffer was driving the cart

Calley Cederlof
Visalia Times-Delta
USA TODAY NETWORK

A Tulare County Office of Education teacher is recuperating after being struck by a golf cart at Exeter Union High School a week ago.

Lori Allan, a special education teacher based at Exeter Union, was walking on campus when she was hit by a golf cart driven by a high school administrator, said Exeter police.

Campus supervisor, Sheldon Logan, was identified by staff and students, as the driver of the four-seater golf cart. Staff and students spoke on the condition of anonymity because they feared retaliation for speaking out.

Tim Hire, Exeter Unified School District superintendent, said he could not release more information because it is a personnel matter.

Logan was not at work this week, staff said.

Those who witnessed or heard the crash take place said it was serious.

“He was driving about 20 mph down a school hallway right before classes were going to be let out while looking at his phone. [Allan] was walking and looking at something in her hands and he nailed her,” a staff member said. “Her head hit so hard that it cracked the windshield of the cart.”

After the incident, Allan was motionless on the ground with a sweater under her head until emergency crews arrived, fellow staff members said.

“She had a baseball-sized bump on one of her eyebrows, she had blood on her face from a cut on her nose and a bad cut on her upper lip,” a witness said. “Her front teeth were chipped,

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Deputies: Pixley student threatens shooting

Sheyanne N Romero
Visalia Times-Delta
USA TODAY NETWORK

A 13-year-old Pixley Middle School student was arrested after threatening a shooting, Tulare County sheriff’s deputies said.

Deputies were called by staff just after 3:30 p.m. to the school, located at 1520 E. Court Ave. According to school officials, the student made threats online.

Once the boy was identified, school administrators “immediately” called sheriff’s deputies.

“There couldn’t be a more appropriate time to remind people that, if you see something suspicious or

that seems off, say something. It is so important” said Sheriff Mike Boudreaux. “And you can do it anonymously. Our deputies can’t look into a situation if they know nothing about it.”

During the investigation, deputies learned the student said he was going “shoot up” the school.

A search warrant was issued at the student’s home in Pixley. Detectives said they were able to collect evidence related to the threats.

Detectives found a handgun and four rifles at his home.

Pixley Union School District declined to comment

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USA TODAY

Robert Mueller
files charges. 6A

Weather

High 69° Low 39°
Sunny. Forecast, 2A

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